BUSE et al.
Serial No: 09/494,401
Amendment in RCE dated October 2, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (*Currently Amended*)   A method of allocating a an internet protocol address to a device connected to a packet-based communication network, comprising:

placing on the network an interrogation in the form of a first control frame from a proxy, said proxy being separate from said device;

receiving at the proxy a response from said device in the form of a second control frame which defines an invalid internet protocol address for said device; and

in response to said invalid internet protocol address, sending from the proxy to said device a third control frame which includes a an internet protocol address allocated to said device.

Claim 2. (*Currently Amended*)   A method according to claim 1 and further comprising:

in response to the reception of said second control frame by said proxy, operating said proxy to test potential internet protocol addresses for conflict with existing internet protocol addresses, and obtaining said internet protocol address when conflict thereof with existing internet protocol addresses is absent.

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Claim 3. (*Currently Amended*) A method according to claim 2 ~~and~~ further comprising operating said proxy to obtain ~~a~~ an internet protocol address for said device by ~~any~~ at least one of steps (a) to (c) as follows:

(a) by means of a request addressed according to a dynamic host communication protocol;

(b) automatic private ~~IP~~ internet protocol addressing; and

(c) manual entry of the internet protocol address.

Claim 4. (*Currently Amended*) A method according to claim 3, wherein said steps (a) to (c) are performed in the order (a), (b) and (c) until the internet protocol address is obtained.

Claim 5. (*Currently Amended*) A method of allocating ~~a~~ an internet protocol address to a device connected to a packet-based communication network, comprising:

placing on the network an interrogation in the form of a first control frame from a proxy;

receiving at the proxy a response in the form of a second control frame which defines an invalid internet protocol address for said device; and

in response to the reception of said second control frame by said proxy, operating said proxy to test potential internet protocol addresses for conflict with existing internet protocol addresses;

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obtaining a ~~a~~ <u>an internet</u> protocol address when conflict thereof with existing

addresses is absent; and

sending from the proxy to said device a third control frame which includes

~~a~~ <u>an internet</u> protocol address allocated to said device.

Claim 6. (*Currently Amended*)   A method according to claim 5 ~~and~~ further comprising

operating said proxy to obtain said <u>internet</u> protocol address for said device by the steps

of:

(a) addressing a request according to a dynamic host communication

protocol;

(b) in the absence of obtaining said <u>internet</u> protocol address by step (a),

automatic private ~~IP~~ <u>internet protocol</u> addressing; and

(c) in the absence of obtaining said <u>internet</u> protocol address by steps (a)

and (b), manual entry of the <u>internet</u> protocol address.

Claim 7. (*Currently Amended*)   A method of allocating a ~~a~~ <u>an internet</u> protocol address
to a device connected to a packet-based communication network in which devices
connected to the network communicate by means of frames each including a media
access control address and ~~a~~ <u>an internet</u> protocol address, comprising:

(a)   broadcasting from a proxy separate from said device an interrogation in the
form of a first control frame including a broadcast address;

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(b)   receiving at said proxy a response from said device, said response being in the form of a second control frame identifying the device and including an invalid internet protocol address for said device;

(c)   in response to said invalid internet protocol address, operating said proxy to obtain an allocated internet protocol address for said device; and

(d)   sending from said proxy to said device a third control frame which includes said allocated internet protocol address.

Claim 8. (*Currently Amended*)   A method as in claim 7, further comprising:

in response to the receipt of said second control frame by said proxy, operating said proxy to test potential internet protocol addresses for conflict with existing internet protocol addresses, and obtaining said allocated internet protocol address when conflict thereof with existing addresses is absent.

Claim 9. (*Currently Amended*)   A method as in claim 8, further comprising operating said proxy to obtain said allocated internet protocol address for said device by means of a request addressed to a server according to a dynamic host communication protocol.

Claim 10. (*Currently Amended*)   A method as in claim 9, wherein when said request is unsuccessful, automatically allocating a an internet protocol address and testing such address for conflict with existing addresses.

Claim 11. (*Currently Amended*)   A method of allocating by a proxy a an internet protocol address to a device connected to a packet-based communication network which includes a server and in which devices connected to the network communicate by means

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of frames each including a media access control address and ~~a~~ an internet protocol

address, comprising:

(a)   broadcasting from said proxy an interrogation in the form of a first control frame including a broadcast address;

(b)   receiving at said proxy a response from said device, said response being in the form of a second control frame identifying the device and including an invalid internet protocol address for said device;

(c)   in response to said invalid internet protocol address, operating said proxy to obtain from said server an allocated internet protocol address for said device; and

(d)   sending from said proxy to said device a third control frame which includes said allocated internet protocol address.

Claim 12. (*Currently Amended*)   A method as in claim 11 wherein said proxy obtains said allocated internet protocol address for said device by means of a request addressed to said server according to a dynamic host communication protocol.